Chapter 3
Basic Behavioral Intervention

Behavioral Model

The behavioral model views the locus of behavior problems as being within the environment rather than within a child (Sarafino, 1996). A three-term paradigm represents the model (S^A-R-S^C), which is also sometimes called the A-B-C model for reasons that will soon become apparent. The first term is an antecedent (A). An antecedent is any event that precedes behavior. It serves as a cue or prompt for the performance or inhibition of a response. Events that function as antecedents can be of several types. They include objects, signs or signals, and actions. Manipulation of behavior through antecedents is called *stimulus control* of behavior. The second term is behavior (B), which refers to any response made to an antecedent cue or prompt. The third term is a consequence (C). A consequence is any event that follows behavior and serves to strengthen or weaken the future chance of that behavior. Consequences include both appetitive and aversive events.

Antecedents

Antecedents can be either simple stimulus events such as a word, e.g., "go" or complex stimulus events such as a setting, e.g., a classroom arrangement. Antecedents can be classified into four categories:

1.   S (*neutral stimulus*), i.e., a stimulus that conveys no information. An example might be a stimulus with which one has no prior experience such as a word in a foreign language.

2. S^D (*discriminative stimulus*), i.e., a stimulus that conveys the information that if a certain response is performed an appetitive or positive consequence is likely. Other terms often applied to this category are instruction, prompt or cue.

3. S^{D-} (*inhibiting antecedent* or stimulus), i.e., a stimulus that conveys the information that if a certain response is performed, not terminated or reduced an aversive or negative consequence is likely. Another term often applied to this category is a warning.

4. $S^{\wedge}$ (*delta stimulus*), i.e., a stimulus that conveys information about a desired response but one which has no history of consequences associated with it. Since there are no likely consequences for responding, it usually does not result in the desired response being emitted or performed.

Consequences

Consequences include both *appetitive* (reinforcing or rewarding) and *aversive* (punitive) events. Reinforcing consequences have incentive value for a student; that is, they are things a student wants. Punitive consequences are dis-incentives; that is, they are things a student avoids. Positive

consequences can be of two types. First, a positive reinforcing event can be the presentation or giving of some desired stimulus, e.g., food or a toy. Second, a reinforcing event can be presenting or allowing an opportunity to engage in some enjoyable response or activity, e.g., talking or playing a game. A reinforcing consequence can also be the withdrawal or termination of something punitive, e.g., withdrawing or ending an unpleasant or even painful stimulus such as abrasive noise; or terminating or ending a punitive activity such as scrubbing desk tops. Negative consequences can involve withholding, withdrawing or terminating something reinforcing, e.g., withholding attention (ignoring); withdrawing or taking away a reinforcing stimulus such as a token; or terminating or ending some reinforcing activity such as participation in a game. Finally, a negative consequence can be the presentation or requirement of something punitive, e.g., presenting a noxious stimulus such as smelling salts; or requiring a punitive activity such as picking up litter. Consequences can be classified into the following categories:

1. S (*neutral stimulus*), i.e., a stimulus that is experienced as neither appetitive nor aversive. An example might be a reinforcement mediator, such as a token, with which the person getting the token has no previous experience and holds no expectations about.

2. S^{R+} (*positive reinforcer*), i.e., a stimulus or activity that is experienced as appetitive. Appetitive or reinforcing events can be of several types:

   1. They can be consumables (primary), for example, a cracker.
   2. They can be material objects (secondary), for example, a toy.
   3. They can be activities (secondary), for example, playing cards.
   4. They can be something social (secondary), for example, a hug.

3. S^{R-} (*negative reinforcer*), i.e., the withdrawal or termination of a stimulus or activity experienced as aversive. Various types of aversive events are illustrated in the next section.

4. S^{P} (*punishment*), i.e., the presentation of some stimulus or requirement of some activity experienced as aversive. An aversive event can also be of several types:

   1. It can be the loss of something appetitive, for example, loss of a privilege.
   2. It can be an unpleasant activity, for example, running laps.
   3. It can be an undesirable circumstance, for example, social isolation.
   4. It can be a noxious substance, for example, lemon juice concentrate.
   5. It can be a painful stimulus, for example, electric shock.

The primary concern of the behavioral model is an immediate environment such as a classroom. An extension of this model, often called the ecological model, takes a much broader view of the environment. When teachers extend behavioral interventions into other classrooms, programs, or the home, they are attempting ecological extensions of their interventions. We will touch on ecological extensions of classroom interventions in various chapters in this manual. This chapter discusses both environmental antecedents and consequences for behavior management.

Stimulus Control

Decontamination

Decontamination of a classroom is the first preventive action that every teacher needs to take. Decontamination means inspecting your classroom carefully for two types of objects. Objects in the first class are distractions. They entice students into engaging in off-task behavior. For example, toys that are present may attract a student's attention and prompt play behavior. Some types of classroom equipment, like a VCR, may attract a student's attention and prompt exploratory behavior. Hazards are another type of distraction. For example, exposed electrical wires or a broken window pane may attract a student's attention and prompt dangerous exploratory behavior. Objects in the second class are potential weapons. They are objects that may appeal to a student who is upset and acting-out. For example, a knife, broom, hammer or letter opener are all potential weapons. You should regularly inspect your classroom for distractions and potential weapons. Remove any objects of either type from your classroom or secure them so students do not have access to them.

Proximity Control

Classroom arrangement for good *proximity control* is the second preventive action that every teacher should take. Proximity control depends on you serving as an inhibiting antecedent for inappropriate behavior. The first type of proximity control is *visual* proximity control. A good classroom arrangement must include visual proximity control. This means you can visually monitor student activity from any position in the classroom. There should be clear lines of sight throughout the room. It should be obvious to students that you can see whatever they do. Take particular care when placing tall furnishings such as dividers, bookcases, movable chalkboards and file cabinets. Place these and other furnishings so they do not obscure student behavior.

Another type of proximity control depends on *physical* proximity. Physical proximity requires that the teacher be as close to each student as possible. This increases a teacher's potential as an inhibiting antecedent. There are two common way teachers use this technique. One way is to go to the side of a student who is misbehaving. Another way is to move a student close to the teacher, for example, next to the teacher's desk. The effectiveness of proximity control can be increased by using a planned seating arrangement. That is, a seating plan that makes it easy for you to use physical proximity with any student in the class. Such an arrangement allows you to quickly increase physical proximity until a misbehavior comes under control.

There are several seating arrangements that increase your physical proximity to all students. The first two are appropriate for whole group instruction. The first arrangement is the U-shaped seating pattern. Use this arrangement with either individual desks or rectangular tables. The instructional area, for example, chalkboard or teacher's desk, should be the focus of the open end of the U. If the number of students is too large to arrange in a single U-shaped row, arrange them in a double or triple U-shaped row. When seating is in the U configuration, the teacher should move around in the center of the U. This increases your proximity to all of the students in the class. The

second arrangement is a variation on the U.   Use this variation for different types of instruction in two separate areas. Alter the U shape by removing the closed end to form two parallel rows   (| |) for seating. Set-up an instructional area at each end. You change the focus for instruction by moving from one end to the other. Use double or triple rows (see Figure 3.1) to expand the number of students this arrangement will accommodate.

The third arrangement for proximity control is one suggested by Frank Hewett and Frank Taylor (1980) in one of the first model demonstration projects for serving students with behavior disorders. This arrangement is good for small group or tutorial instruction. The originators of this arrangement refer to it as a wheel. We will call it the teaching triangle. Effective use of the teaching triangle requires either a teacher's aide or student assistants. The first step is to divide the students into three groups. A group can vary in size from as few as one student to as many as ten. If all the students are at about the same instructional level in each subject area, divide them anyway that is convenient. If the students are not all on the same level, divide them into three groups where each group is at about the same level. If each student is at about the same level for each subject, the groups will remain the same across subjects. If students are at varying levels in different subjects, the membership of the three groups will change by subject. Once the membership of the groups is decided, arrange the seating for three groups. This can be done using three tables, one for each group, or three desk clusters. If the seating is clusters of desks, use the U-shaped arrangement discussed earlier.

The teaching triangle works this way. One table or desk cluster is for instruction. The second group is for application or practice activities. The third group is for review work. You stay with the instructional table or cluster. The teaching aide or student assistant supervises the other two groups. If desk clusters in the U-shape are used, place the U's open-end to open-end ([ ]), if possible. This permits the aide to move in the center between groups and maintain good physical proximity. With the parallel row (| |) arrangement each row can serve as one piece of the triangle. If there are student assistants, use one assistant for each of the non-instructional groups. The student selected should be the highest functioning student in each group. With the U-shaped seating arrangement, each student assistant should sit in a central position [see Figure 3.2].

To illustrate how this procedure works, let's assume a one- hour period for reading instruction (Re) [see Figure 3.3]. The instructional group will be (I), the practice group (P) and the review group (R). The three student groups will be (1), (2) and (3). The arrangement for the first 20 minutes is as follows: Re-I-1, Re-P-2 and Re-R-3. During the first 20 minutes group 1 gets reading instruction. Group 2 gets practice activities based on the most recent reading instruction. Group 3 gets review activities based on earlier reading instruction. Review activities help to maintain material learned earlier. At the end of the first 20 minutes, the groups rotate. During the second 20 minutes the arrangement is as follows: Re-I-3, Re-P-1 and Re-R-2. At the end of the second 20 minutes, the groups rotate again. During the third 20 minutes, the arrangement is as follows: Re-I- 2, Re-P-3 and Re-R-1.
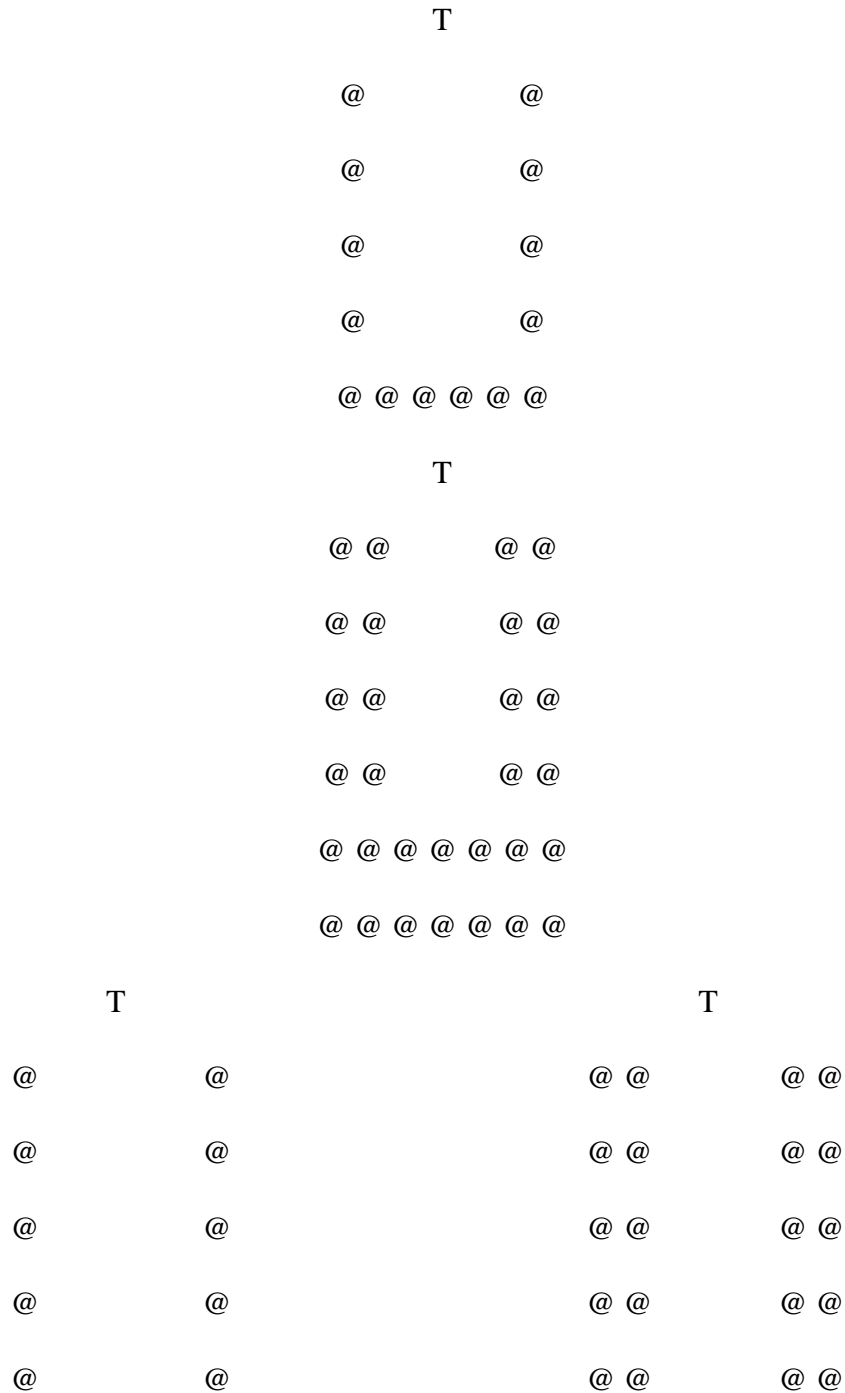
Seating for Proximity Control

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<u>Figure 3.1</u>. Some possible classroom seating configurations to maximize proximity control.

Seating for Proximity Control

Instructional Triangle

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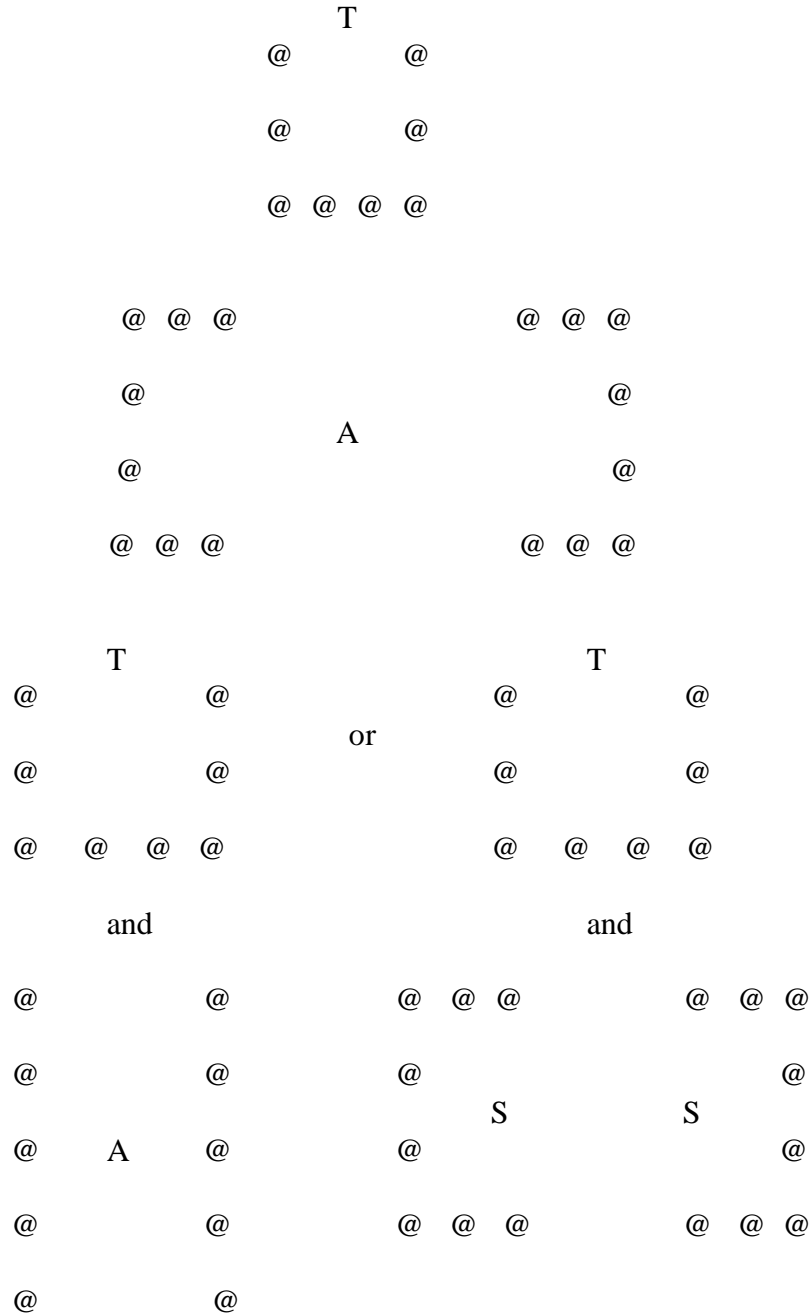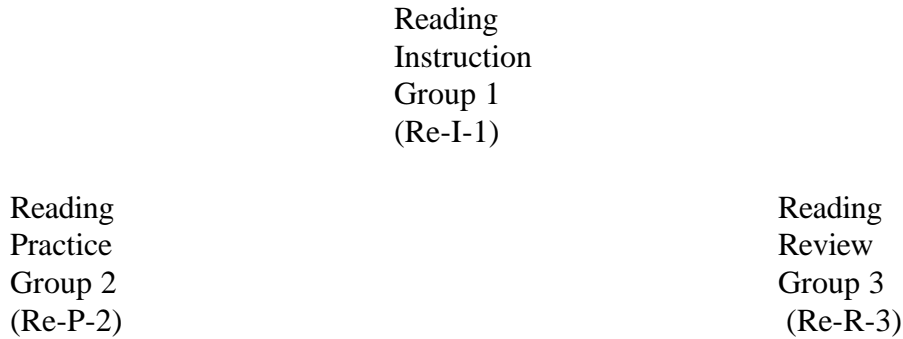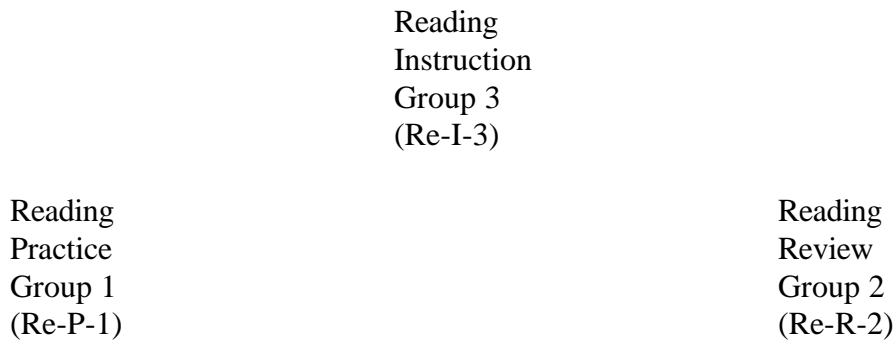
Figure 3.2. Some possible seating arrangements for using the Instructional "Triangle" in a classroom. T = Teacher   A = Teaching Aide   S = Student.

First 20 minutes, e.g., 10:00 - 10:20.

Reading
Instruction
Group 1
(Re-I-1)

Reading   Reading
Practice   Review
Group 2   Group 3
(Re-P-2)   (Re-R-3)

Second 20 minutes, e.g., 10:20 - 10:40.

Reading
Instruction
Group 3
(Re-I-3)

Reading   Reading
Practice   Review
Group 1   Group 2
(Re-P-1)   (Re-R-2)

Third 20 minutes, e.g., 10:40 - 11:00.

Reading
Instruction
Group 2
(Re-I-2)

Reading   Reading
Practice   Review
Group 3   Group 1
(Re-P-3)   (Re-R-1)
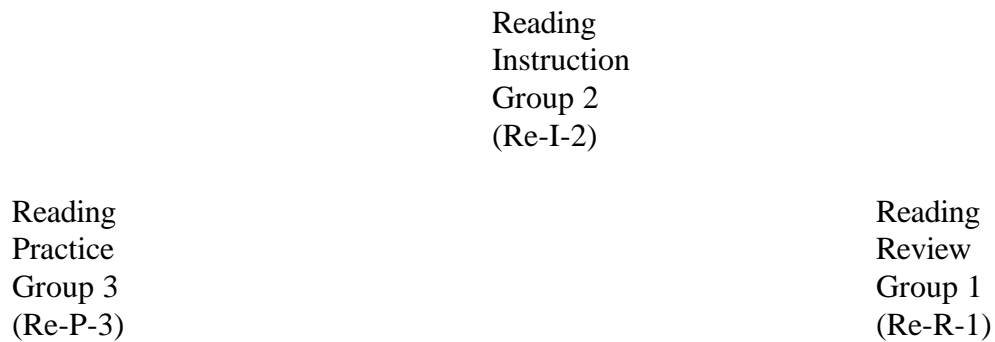
Figure 3.3. An example of the instructional triangle applied to reading instruction where each of the three groups receives instruction, practice and review on a rotating basis.

You provide small group instruction throughout the one-hour period. The teaching aide manages the practice and review groups throughout the one-hour period. If student assistants are used, they manage their respective groups while doing their own work. Tasks for student assistants may be briefer than tasks for other students. This will make it easier for them to perform their other duties. Student assistants need to be the highest functioning member of their group. Good students are less likely to suffer from shortened assignments. They also have the level of skill necessary to provide assistance.

Teacher Behavior

Important aspects of teacher behavior include setting *behavioral expectations*, prompting through the use of *signal control*, and *de-escalation*.

Behavioral Expectations: You must make clear what your expectations are for student behavior in your classroom. Do this in a public manner, for example, by posting a set of classroom rules. If you don't use public posting, give each student a personal copy of the class rules. Rules should state how students should conduct themselves rather than what they shouldn't do. There should be a small number of class rules. State rules as briefly as possible. Usually, five to seven rules are enough to cover behavioral expectations. Simply having rules is not enough to get consistent compliance with them. However, you must set rules before there can be compliance with your expectations. Compliance depends on the consequences for both compliance and violation of the rules. There will be more on consequences later.

You must review your rules regularly to keep attention on them and to communicate that you think they are important. Review of the rules does not mean just occasionally reading the rules. Rather, call on students to cite rules. This will help them remember the rules. Also, ask students to discuss what rules mean for behavior. The discussion should include examples of rule violations. Discussions of this kind are important to help students both know and understand the rules. Provide positive feedback to students for correct recall or explanation of a rule. A sample set of class rules might look like the following:

1. Get permission before speaking.
2. Get permission before leaving your desk.
3. Maintain a good sitting position.
4. Be quiet and calm.
5. Be courteous to others.

Signal Control: The first type of teacher signal control is the use of audible signals. One common method for giving an audible signal is the *gavel technique*. This is simply a single or double, forceful rap of an object on a desk or table. The object can be a gavel, the knuckles, a ruler or any object that will produce an audible signal. The *hand technique* is another option. This uses snapping the fingers or clapping the hands together to produce an audible signal. You can no doubt think of other ways to produce audible signals. You must plan, in advance, on what signals you will use. You

must use your signals consistently over time so they are clearly understood. To be effective, there must be consequences for either responding to or failing to respond to signals. Signals will usually not control behavior unless they are paired with a consequence. Consequences are discussed later in this chapter and in subsequent chapters.

An audible signal to control attention to task and work rate is a kitchen timer. The timer ticking and the bell serve as audible signals. For example, suppose you have four paragraphs on the chalkboard or on overheads. The students are to read and identify the misspellings in the paragraphs by writing the misspelled words on paper. Instead of allowing a fixed period for the whole task, use brief periods, for example, five minutes to complete each paragraph. Tell students that you are going to set a timer for five minutes. Tell them when the bell rings you will remove the first paragraph. Finally, tell the students that after the first paragraph is removed the timer will start again for the second paragraph.   Continue in this manner through all four paragraphs. This technique will keep attention focused on the task. It also provides *external pacing* for work on the task.

Commonly used vocal signals include either a name or a cue word. Use a name for a single errant student. If more than one student needs prompting, use a cue word. Examples of cue words include general terms like class, group, or children. Give vocal signals in a loud and forceful manner. You can also pair vocal signals with visual signals to increase their effect. For example, you can use an open-hand with palm-out as a stop signal. Two other hand signals are the vertical finger across the lips for quiet and the pointing finger to single-out an errant student. Accompany verbal signals to a group with roving eye-contact. Accompany a verbal signal for a single errant student with fixed eye-contact. If eye-contact is not possible, use a fixed gaze instead. In short, clearly communicate intense visual attention along with the other signal or signals.

Another type of signal control uses body language to communicate. First, be sure to use a proper *facial expression*. The overall facial expression should be the so-called "poker face." That is, your feelings should not be readable in your facial expression. Sometimes inappropriate behavior is amusing. However, it is dangerous to communicate this because it sends a mixed message. You may also be angry or distressed by inappropriate behavior. Giving this away through facial expression can actually reinforce inappropriate behavior and prompt further misbehavior. This is especially likely if one or more students are trying to manipulate your emotions for their own advantage or amusement. Even if manipulation was not the intent, your reaction may be amusing and stimulate further misbehavior.

A second aspect of body language is *posture and stance*. If you are sitting, your body posture should be erect with shoulders squared before giving a signal. If you are standing, your body stance should be erect with feet spread as in the military position of parade rest. Place your hands on your hips to show readiness for further action.   An alternate stance is to point, with the other arm by your side, at a single errant student. If you begin walking toward a student or group, your walk should be direct, at a quick pace and confident. Your hands can be either on the hips or at the sides. In a discipline situation, don't clasp your hands in front of or behind your body. If a student is agitated and could become aggressive, your arms should be in a less threatening position. A non-threatening

and defensive position for your arms is to fold them across the mid-body area.

Another use of body language is *blocking*. Use blocking when one student's misbehavior is an antecedent or consequence for another student's misbehavior. Move directly to the two students to increase proximity control. Place your body between the students to block the signals passing between them. If necessary, continue to increase physical proximity with one of the students. Get as close as necessary to inhibit the student's behavior unless the student is negatively aroused and might strike you. Continue to block signals between the two students as you increase proximity to the targeted student.

In a now classic study, Jacob Kounin (1970) investigated factors that affect the use of what he calls *desists*. Desists are similar to signal control. His research shows what the major factor is in effective signal control. This effectiveness factor is student perception of teacher competence. Perception of teacher competence for behavior management depends on several teacher behaviors.

1.	The teacher consistently targets the correct student.
2.	The teacher consistently targets the most serious misbehavior first.
3.	The teacher responds immediately to misbehavior.
4.	The teacher can handle more than one event at a time.
5.	The teacher's signal control is clear and firm.
6.	The teacher's management style is smooth:
	a.	The teacher maintains a comfortable classroom pace.
	b.	The teacher communicates a sense of purpose and progress.
	c.	The teacher only engages in necessary talk.
	d.	The teacher maintains focus on the task at hand.
	e.	The teacher can make smooth transitions from one activity to another.

A third type of signal control involves verbal behavior. One common verbal signal is instructions. There are many types of instructions. They can be either spoken or written. Instructions can be for academic tasks, non-academic activities or conduct. Be sure that all instructions are clear and concise. Ambiguous instructions create confusion, require unnecessary discussion and waste time. Ambiguous instructions may also bore students. Students who become bored often seek a way to escape. Escape frequently means engaging in behavior that is disruptive (Harrison, Gunter, Reed, & Lee, 1996).

Further, you should word oral instructions to minimize commotion in your classroom. For example, don't use an instruction that gives general permission to students to get out of their seats and move around. That is, don't say, "When you have finished, bring me your paper." This type of instruction can result in several students being up and moving about at the same time. Usually, it is better to say, "When you finish, raise your hand and I will come and pick up your paper." Now, no one has permission to be up and moving about.

Another type of verbal signal is questions. You should also use questions that reduce

commotion in your classroom. For example, don't ask, "Who knows how to spell 'diskette'?" This is an invitation for everyone to respond and if they do, auditory bedlam results. It is better to ask, "Ken, how do you spell 'diskette'?" Now, only one person has an invitation to respond. Further, you should only acknowledge a response from Ken. You should also randomize your selection of students for directed questions. Random selection makes the target of the next question unpredictable. Uncertainty increases attention to the task at hand. Everyone attends better when no one knows when he or she will get a question.

Never use a question in place of a command. For example, don't say, "Jack, will you stop poking Leon?" When you ask this, you are setting yourself up for a response like, "No." Then, what will you say? It would be much better to say, "Jack, stop poking Leon." In short, think about the likely effects of your instructions and questions on student behavior before you use them. Careful attention to how you word your instructions and questions can have a big impact on student behavior.

Combine instructions and questions with audible, visual, or vocal signals. For example, use an audible signal for quiet like the gavel before giving an oral instruction. Before beginning a question use the extended open-hand with palm out as a signal not to answer at will. For an in-unison response, use the vocal signal "everyone" combined with a visual signal like out-stretched, open arms. For an individual response, use the name of the student as a verbal signal and the pointing finger prompt as a visual signal. Usually, established combinations of audible, visual and vocal signals produce the best results.

De-escalation: De-escalation refers to a teacher response to disrupt a psychological state in a student that may lead to inappropriate behavior. Teachers should be particularly alert for negative signs in students. Negative signs usually signal that a student is in a state of emotional arousal. Negative arousal is often related to anxiety, helplessness, frustration or anger. Signs suggesting negative emotional arousal may appear in facial expressions, body posture or behavior (see Figure 3.4). These signs may not always signal trouble brewing, particularly if they occur in isolation and are brief. It is especially important to look for *congruence*. That is, several different signs that all suggest the same internal state. When there is a clear sign of negative emotional arousal, you should head off further escalation of the condition. De-escalation is begun by making supportive, verbal contact with a student.

You should be close to a student for the initial contact. Don't make verbal contact with a student from a distance. Loud, public verbal contact may embarrass a student or otherwise aggravate the situation. Go to a student or ask the student to come to you. You must be close enough to a student to have a quiet, private conversation. However, don't get within hitting or kicking distance of a student. If a student should lash out, you don't want to be within striking distance. If a student is sitting, it is less threatening to kneel or sit down so you're on the student's level.

Initial contact should be in a calm, non-threatening manner and not imply any prejudgment of the situation. The contact should be in a form that invites a response. The contact will usually be either an information-seeking question or an observational statement that invites a response.

Non-verbal Signs of Negative Emotional Arousal

Facial Expression:

1. Tight, thin lips that are either straight or turned down at the corners.
2. Narrowed eyes with eyebrows drawn slightly down and chin drawn in toward the neck.
3. Widened eyes with nostrils slightly flared and chin forward.
4. Clenched teeth shown by tight, flexed jaw muscles.
5. Pursed lips.

Body Posture:

1. Slumped shoulders with head and eyes down. If sitting, a student may cross his or her arms or if standing the hands may be in pockets.
2. Arms crossed with hands clenched into fists or arms crossed with hands tightly gripping upper arms.
3. Standing with body leaning forward and hands spread wide apart and resting on or gripping the edges of a table or desk.
4. Tightly clenched hands resting on a table or desk or forming the apex of a triangle supporting the head.
5. One hand holding the other in a hand-wringing gesture.
6. Sitting in a chair with ankles locked. The student will either grip the arms of the chair or one hand will hold the other hand down in the lap.
7. Eyes closed with one hand covering and appearing to grip the nose.
8. Head down with face covered by both hands.
9. Standing, arms behind back with one grasped by the hand of the other as if restraining it.
10. Sucking or chewing motions directed at the hand or fingers.

Incidental Behavior:

1. Rapid, shallow breathing.
2. Sighing.
3. Rapid, short up and down or back and forth movement of a leg or foot.
4. Repeated kicking at the ground with the toe of one foot.
5. Non-verbal sounds such as tisk or a groaning sound.
6. Breaking something such as a pencil.
7. Tearing or wadding up a sheet or paper.
8. Exaggerated behavior such as slamming a book shut.
9. Undirected utterance of an expletive such as damn!
10. Mumbling or talking to oneself.

Figure 3.4. Three categories with examples of signals that may indicate emotional arousal.

Information Seeking Examples:

"Are you having trouble with something?" OR
"Do you not understand something?"

Observational Statement Examples:

"It looks to me like you are upset about something." OR
"You seem to be having a problem?"

If there is no answer or comment from the student, use a follow-up probe.

Follow-up Examples:

"Why don't you tell me about it." OR
"Maybe I can help."

Frequently, in a classroom situation, a student's problem is the task at hand. There are several common sources of difficulty:

1.   The task may be too difficult.
2.   The task may be too long.
3.   The task instructions may not be clear.
4.   The necessary preparation such as a homework assignment was not done.
5.   A particular point in a task is causing difficulty.
6.   The need for some available resource such as a glossary or number line is not recognized.

If the source of the emotional arousal is one of the above or something similar, try to provide some help. Help a student get past the difficulty and engage the task constructively. Often, the solution is as simple as pointing out the need for some resource, explaining a direction, changing the task somewhat, or giving a prompt or cue. If the source of the problem is not task related, you will need to further explore the difficulty with the student through a *supportive dialogue*. Do this immediately, if possible. Otherwise, offer to talk with the student about the problem at another time during the day.

Frequently, just having a sympathetic ear is enough to diminish the negative emotional arousal associated with a problem. Supportive dialogue with a student about a problem is an important aspect of a teacher's role. Teachers should attend to several aspects of any communication with a troubled student. When you talk with a negatively aroused student, listen for the emotional content of the student's responses. These feelings may appear in either verbalizations or body language or both. Listen for emotionally laden words like hate, mad, and unfair. Watch body language for clues like those discussed in the section above. In addition, listen for the source of the feelings. That is, what event, person or actions appear related to the negative emotional arousal?

Help a student talk through a problem situation rather than impulsively acting on it. Be careful about the way you respond to a student. Your *response style* can disrupt rather than aid communication. Avoid the use of such response styles as:

1. *Advice Giving*: "You need to be more tolerant." Constructive advice is alright, if a student seeks it. Before giving advice, try to lead the student with questions or prompts.
2. *Changing the Topic*: "How's your sister doing these days?"
3. *Criticizing*: "You don't ever think anything through."
4. *Disagreeing*: "I don't believe there is any truth in that at all.
5. *Labeling*: "You special education students are all just alike."
6. *Lecturing*: "When I was your age, I'd have never let myself be talked into cheating."
7. *Moralizing*: "A decent person would never speak that way."
8. *Threatening*: "If you don't get your act together, you're going to wish you had."

Use response styles that are likely to aid rather than disrupt communication when trying to discuss a problem with a student. Use response styles like:

1. *Agreeing*: "I understand why that would make you angry."
2. *"I Feel" Statements*: "I really regret that you're having problems. "I want to help you, if you'll let me."
3. *Information Giving*: "The right way to deal with this is to petition the discipline committee."
4. *Questioning*: "Why do you think Mr. Wilson is out to get you?"
5. *Reflecting*: "If I understand you, you think that you were unjustly singled out."
6. *Sharing*: "I know being an adolescent is tough. When I was your age, I thought no one liked me either."

A supportive talk with a troubled student helps the student to be open and talk about what is bothering him or her. The purpose is to help the student find an acceptable outlet for negative emotional arousal. It is also an opportunity for the student to think through the problem and understand it. In the process, you may learn something useful about the student's perspective. Any resulting solution to the problem is incidental and a bonus outcome.

There are several difficulties that may arise while trying to conduct a supportive dialogue with a troubled student. The student may become *defensive* and question or challenge you, as in the following example.

"What about Charles? He isn't doing his work either."

Your response should be to calmly *re-direct*. "Perhaps, but I'm trying to find out why you aren't doing your work."

Or, a student might be *threatening* and say something like the following,

"If you don't get off my case, I'm going to lose it."

The correct response is to remain controlled and supportive while *setting limits*. "I just want to understand what the problem is, but if you can't control yourself, I'll have no choice but to send for the principal."

If you are rebuffed by a student, don't pressure the student to talk about the problem. Make a tactful withdrawal. Your offer to engage in a dialogue alone may be enough support for the student. Back-off and take a wait-and-see attitude.

A student may have an emotional outburst and become *destructive or aggressive*. In this event, your first responsibility is to ensure the safety of your other students and yourself. You should always have a planned response available for this type of occurrence. It is just this type of situation that makes school-wide, support programs such as a crisis management team an important part of discipline policy. As a last resort, when there is a clear and inescapable danger, you may have to control the student's behavior directly. *Physical management* of a student's behavior should only be done by someone with proper training, except in a life threatening situation, and in accordance with school system policy. Lohrmann-O'Rourke and Zirkel (1998) includes a discussion of case law bearing on the use of physical restraint which should be read by anyone planning on using physical management.

Physical Management

There may arise situations where a student is out of control and none of your usual behavior management techniques are adequate. If there is a clear danger to the student, others or yourself, you may have to physically intervene to control the student. There are several basic techniques that you can use in such situations.

Preparation

Before describing these techniques, there are several steps that you should follow before you act:

1.   If possible, send someone to get help.

2.   Make sure you have removed any personal items that a student could use as a weapon against you. For example, remove from your pockets such items as pencils, take off other items such as a necktie, necklace or earrings.

3.   Make sure there are no objects lying about that a student could use as a weapon such as scissors, letter opener or broom.

When you begin moving toward an acting-out student, keep talking. Act calm and try to

persuade the student to bring himself or herself under control. As you approach, present a non-threatening posture. One such posture is to place one arm horizontally across your stomach area. Position your other arm vertically with your elbow resting on the back of your hand. Rest your chin on the hand of the vertical arm (see Figure 3.5a). This position is not only non-threatening but will allow you to swing either arm out and up to block a blow directed at you. Don't get within striking distance of a student until you are ready to act.

Acting

When you first contact a student, try to grasp his or her dominant arm firmly. You should approach a student from the side of his or her dominant arm. Face in the same direction as the student and grasp the student's arm with your closest hand. Grasp an arm slightly above the elbow. Grasp the wrist with your other hand. Pull lightly back on the wrist while exerting pressure against the arm just above the elbow. The arm should be straight (see Figure 3.5b). Begin walking the student away from the area using your hold on the arm to bring the student along. If a student should try to strike you with the free arm, use the arm in your grasp as a shield. You do this by placing it between yourself and the striking arm (see Figure 3.5c).

If a student breaks free, you will need to move to re-establish contact. This is a potentially dangerous point in the management process.   It is the point where a student is most likely to strike out at you. A student may use either arms or legs in an attack. As you move toward a student, maintain a non-threatening posture like the one described earlier. From this stance, you can quickly form a two-arm block against an overhead strike or against a kick. If you cannot block a kick with your arms, block it with your leg. You should raise one leg and turn sideways to the kick as you raise your leg. Absorb the kick on the fleshy part of your upper leg. From the non-threatening stance, you can also quickly engage in one-arm blocks of blows coming directly at you or from the side. Whenever you block an arm strike, try to get a hold on the attacking arm, preferably at the wrist.

If a student resists you and you have a hold on one of his or her wrists, swing behind the student while hanging on to the secured wrist. Reach around and grasp the student's free wrist and pull the arms into a crossed position. Pull on the two secured wrists firmly and pin the student's body against your body (see Figure 3.5d). If the student continues to resist, press your knee into the back of the student's legs and step back while pulling on the secured wrists. This will throw the student off balance and he or she will begin to fall backwards. Catch the student's body on your leg and slide the student gently to the floor on your leg as you bend your knees and lower your own body (see Figure 3.5e).

Once you and the student are on the floor, wrap your legs around the student's mid-section. Next, you should bring your legs over the students legs so both of your feet are between the student's legs. Keep the student's arms crossed and secured by the wrists. Pull the student's upper body firmly against your own (see Figure 3.5f). Watch for attempts by a student to use the head to strike you in the face. One way to deal with this is to press your forehead firmly against the back of the student's neck. If done properly, there is no longer enough freedom of motion in the neck to swing the head.
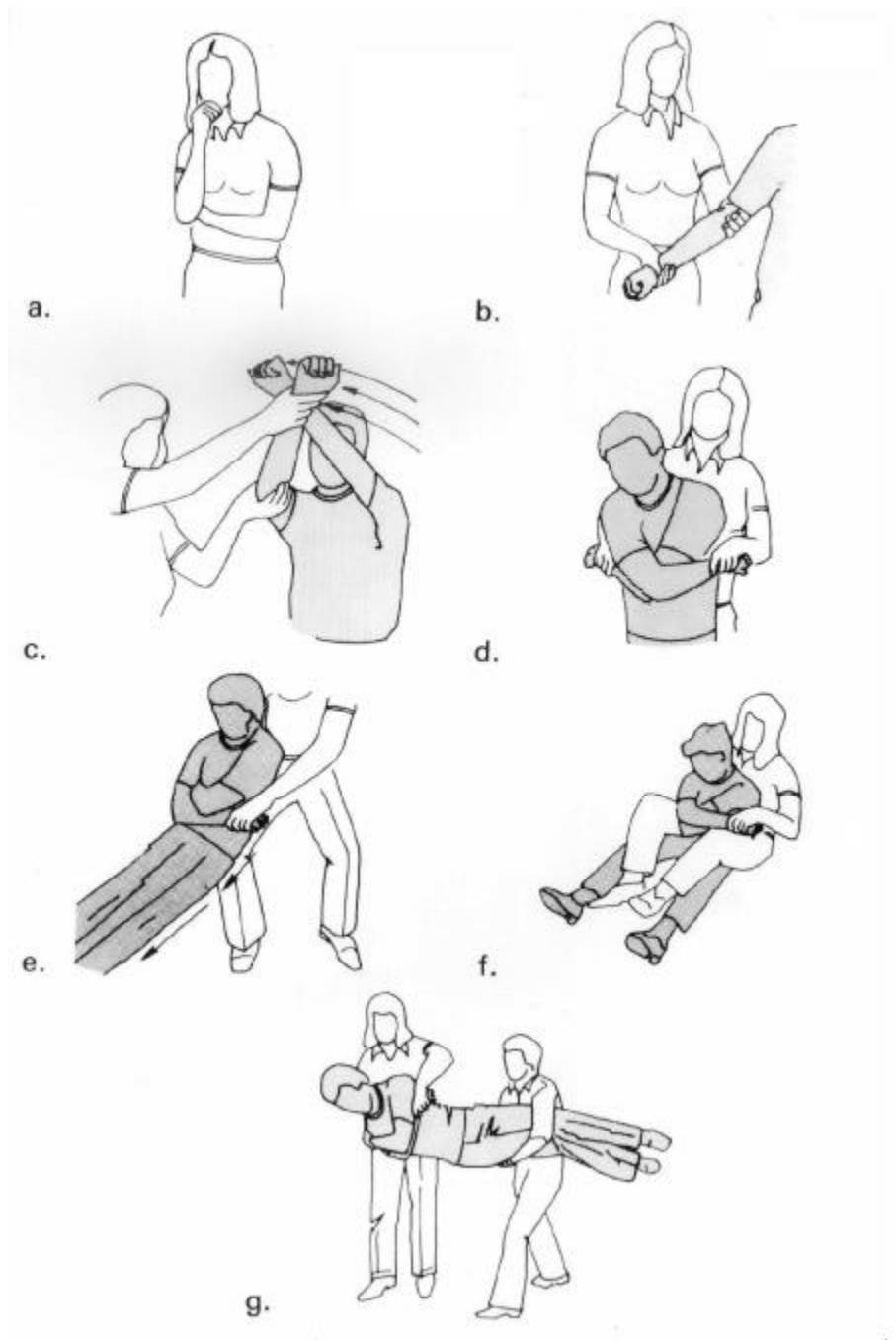
<u>Figure 3.5</u>.   Illustration of several physical management techniques adapted from the training manual for the film Classroom Crisis Control, Hinzman Productions; Clinton, PA.

Continue to restrain the student until he or she has calmed down or help arrives. If you decide to remove the student from the area, maintain your grip on the secured wrists. Have an assistant wrap his or her arms around the student's legs just above the knees. Raise the student and carry him or her, move in the direction that the student's back is facing (see Figure 3.5g). If the student is heavy, you may need two assistants to carry the student. The third person should support the student's mid-section by wrapping his or her arms around the student's waist. The third person should also be behind the student.

A student may threaten to use a large object as a weapon, for example a stool. If the object is held high, for example above the head, keep the student talking. The longer a student holds an object the heavier it will become. If you decide that you must secure the weapon, you should move quickly and go directly to it. You need to get inside the arch that the weapon will follow if swung at you. Try to grab the weapon as close to where the student is holding it as possible. Quickly move to the side and behind the student. Secure his or her arms in the crossed arms hold described earlier.

If a student threatens to throw a smaller object, such as a book, one strategy is to throw a distraction at the student. The distraction should be an object not likely to cause injury such as a jacket or magazine. Throw a distraction into the student's field of vision. This will temporarily obscure you and the action you take. Once the distraction is thrown, move. If a student throws an object at you, it will be thrown at the spot where you were last seen. Move immediately to the student and secure the student in the crossed arms hold described earlier.

The above are a few basic techniques and should be adequate for most situations. <u>Before using any of the techniques described, you should do the following</u>. First, find out what your school system's policy is on physical restraint and follow it. If these is no policy, lobby for the school system to develop one. Second, enroll in a workshop or obtain training materials on physical management. Third, find someone to practice with and practice the techniques until they are like second nature to you.

<u>Conclusion</u>

There are many things that you can do at the classroom level to modify antecedent conditions that may affect both discipline and motivation for learning. If you would like to evaluate your own classroom environment, you might begin by using the checklist that follows to see if you have addressed several critical considerations for classroom management.

****

Classroom Environment Checklist

_____ 1.   The classroom has been decontaminated of all distractions, dangerous objects and potential weapons.

_____ 2.   The classroom arrangement permits good visual proximity control.

_____ 3.   The classroom arrangement permits good physical proximity control.

_____ 4.   Non-verbal signal controls have been determined.

_____ 5.   Verbal signals for behavior management have been determined.

_____ 6.   The behavioral expectations for the class have been determined and posted.

****

Informal Use of Consequences

Attention for Compliance

Perhaps the most commonly used informal intervention is attention for compliance. Attention means *social reinforcement* for compliance with classroom expectations. *Verbal praise* is easily the most readily available social reinforcer in any classroom. Besides being available, it is cheap and not difficult to dispense. Every teacher should make abundant use of social praise for compliance. Unfortunately, teachers usually don't use social praise frequently enough. Research shows that teachers use *admonishment* for non-compliance about 10 times as often as praise for compliance. One would expect to find this ratio reversed in a classroom with a positive climate. Research shows that reinforcement for compliance is more effective than admonishment for non-compliance. Social reinforcement for compliant behavior increases the likelihood of compliance in the future. Social praise also draws other students' attention to a model for compliant behavior. The reinforced model shows other students what behavior is expected. The model also shows that positive teacher attention is gained through compliant behavior.

For maximum effectiveness, use social praise consistently. However, give praise only to students whose behavior merits your praise. Social praise should always include both the name of the student and specifically what the praise is for. For example, "Jake and Wanda did a great job following directions and got their materials put away quickly." Rather than, "Good following directions." Deliver praise immediately following compliance, if possible. However, when a delay cannot be avoided, verbally reconstruct the compliant behavior as you give praise. For example, "Norma, I want to thank you. At the beginning of the period, you were very courteous when our

visitor asked you a question." Rather than, "Norma, thank you for being courteous. You should deliver praise sincerely rather than mechanically. Finally, don't get in a "praise rut" and use the same expression over and over. Put some variety in your choice of praise words. "Good" said 100 times in one day doesn't sound very genuine even if it is sincere. Here are a few sample praise words. You should develop your own list to help you maintain variety.

helpful	nice	pleasant	bright
fine	wonderful	beautiful	magnificent
splendid	terrific	witty	clever
valuable	great	impressive	outstanding
smashing	superb	excellent	good
fabulous	marvelous	fantastic	exceptional

Another way to give social praise for compliance is with tangible forms of praise or recognition. This recognition should not, however, replace the use of verbal praise in the classroom. We discussed school-wide recognition programs in Chapter Two. However, you can develop a recognition program for your own class. There are two types of classroom programs. First, you can create an in-class program. This program might select one or two students each week for special recognition. Recognize a student for best behavior and most improved behavior. Be sure you give recognition to a student of each type. For younger students create a "Student of the Week" or "Students of the Week" spot on a bulletin board. Place each student's name and reason for the honor on the board. Placement on the recognition board should carry some special consequence such as a privilege that other students don't enjoy. The bulletin board approach may embarrass some older students. For these students use a verbal announcement of the award or tell them privately.

The second type of program is a parent-note program. This type of program makes uses of a special award certificate for younger students (see Figure 3.6). You can often find these certificates in school supply stores. You can also design your own. For older students a letter-of-commendation is more appropriate (see Figure 3.6). Provide this type of recognition for meeting a pre-set standard or requirement such as going all day without misbehavior. Use a standard that is suitable for your classroom. Recognition can be for conduct behavior, social skills or academic performance. The certificate or letter should make a strong, positive statement about the student's behavior. Direct the certificate or letter at a student's parents. Attempt to get parents to give additional reinforcement at home when their child gets a commendation. Reward at home for performance at school represents an ecological extension of your intervention.

The only type of student that social reinforcement is often ineffective with is the under socialized aggressive student. These students have not had positive social stimuli established as secondary reinforcers. Patterson, Reid and Dishion (1992) say this is due in part to an inconsistent history of social reinforcement during a child's social development. These students may be unresponsive to social reinforcement or have an negative reaction to it. They need to be reinforced with more concrete reinforcers such as consumables, materials or activities. However, you should consistently pair non-social reinforcement with social reinforcement. This will increase the likelihood

++

S U P E R   B E H A V I O R   A W A R D

This award is presented to:_____

For:_____

And can be exchanged for:_____

_____   _____
Signature   Date

++
The note **above** is for younger students.

The note **below** is for older students.
++

Dear Parent:

I am pleased to inform you that _____ has been an exemplary student in my class. This note is a token of my sincere appreciation for good behavior, good work, and being a positive model for classmates. Receipt of this note also earns:

_____

I'm confidant that this excellent performance will continue in the future and that more notes like this will follow.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

++

Figure 3.6. Examples of good note home forms for both younger and older students.

of social stimuli becoming effective reinforcers.

Ignoring:

There are several possible responses to non-compliance. One that is very effective with attention-getting behavior directed at a teacher is *ignoring* or *extinction*. Ignoring is a simple technique that is not easy to use effectively. The first problem with ignoring is deciding when it is appropriate. It is only appropriate under two conditions. One, the target behavior is temporarily tolerable, even if it should increase. Two, the target behavior is under the control of a reinforcer that you can control. Frequently this means the reinforcer is your response to the behavior. Don't make the assumption that because your response to the behavior is an admonition that it isn't reinforcing. Teacher attention of any type can function as a reinforcer for some students. If the two above conditions are met, the technique is simply done by not responding to the behavior. Don't even look in the student's direction, because this is visual attention to the behavior.

The second problem is not attending to the behavior. It is likely that you have an habitual response to the behavior. Like any habit, attending to a student behavior is difficult to give up. Initially, you must make a conscious effort to ignore the behavior. You might even find it helpful to monitor and record your response to a student's behavior. In short, if you can't control your own behavior you'll have difficulty controlling student behavior. Even properly done, ignoring may cause the behavior to increase at first. You might think of attention-getting behavior as operating on the principle of "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." However, if you persist, the behavior will begin to decrease. Even after it has begun to decrease, you may see occasional, brief increases in the behavior. Think of these as probes to check on the availability of the reinforcer, that is, your attention. If you use the technique for a reasonable period and no decrease occurs, you probably made a mistake about what is reinforcing the behavior.

Finally, in some instances you may determine that the reinforcer for the behavior is not your attention but peer attention. If you can control the peers' attention to behavior, you can still use ignoring as an intervention for a problem behavior. One way to control peer attention to a problem behavior is to instruct the other students to ignore a problem student. For example, "Class, Chuck is trying to be cute again and disrupt our lesson. Please do not look at him or laugh at him." Follow these instructions up with verbal praise or some other reward for students who obey the instructions. This is more difficult to do than simply controlling your own response.

Another way to handle peer reinforcement is to make a group reward contingent on a single student's behavior. For example, tell the class that you will keep a record of the number of times that Chuck cuts-up in class. Tell them if he doesn't misbehave more than some criterion number of times, everyone will get to do some enjoyable activity. After stating the contingency, remind the class to be careful not to encourage Chuck by laughing at him or commenting on his behavior. These types of interventions have a good chance of working if the behavior is reinforced by peer attention. Interventions to change a student's behavior that involve the peer group are ecological interventions.

Structured Use of Consequences

This section discusses interventions that are structured. Structure means that the interventions are somewhat more formal and require some planning and monitoring. Four types of structured interventions are covered: Group consequences, individual consequences, self-management and contracting.

<u>Group Consequences</u>

Planning a positive, group contingency for behavior management requires several steps (see Figure 3.7). First, there must be a set of behavior rules or expectations. This is the same task described in the discussion about behavioral expectations earlier in this chapter. Second, determine the interval for the contingency. It is important to do this before selecting rewards. The longer the period the more valuable the reward should be. At first, it is better to use a short interval, such as a class period, and progressively lengthen the interval. In most cases, the interval should not exceed a maximum of one week. Wait until a contingency is consistently met within an interval before increasing the length. The minimum criterion for consistency should be three weeks. Third, develop a menu of rewards to use as consequences for good behavior, for example, game time, music time, video time, or a treat.

A menu of choices provides variety and reduces the possibility of satiation. A single reward used repeatedly will soon lose its incentive value. You can generate a list of possible rewards in several ways. You can get ideas from your experience with students, by surveying students about what they would like, or by sampling. To do a rewards survey, create a checklist of possible reinforcers. Ask your students to rate each reward on a five point (1 - 5) scale. Label one (1) on the scale as "don't like" and five (5) as "like very much." Sampling requires exposing your students to potential rewards and observing their reactions. Fourth, develop a record-keeping system. The most frequently used system is tally marks on the chalkboard. Finally, take a baseline on the level of rule violation that currently exists. Take the baseline before announcing the reinforcement contingency because the reinforcement contingency will affect the baseline.

To take a baseline, keep a private record, on a tally sheet, of violations of the class rules. These can be either rules that already exist or new rules you have just introduced. Each recording period should be for the same interval selected to use with the contingency. If the contingency interval will be a class period, each class period will be a separate recording period. Plot the results of each recording period, or an average of all the recording periods for each day, on a graph (see Figure 3.8).

Continue taking and plotting data until the data line on the graph is relatively consistent across time. You now have a baseline. The next step is to set a criterion for reinforcement. If the level of rule infractions is low, the criterion can be set at whatever would represent an acceptable level. For example, the average, daily number of infractions per period is ten and five would be acceptable.

Planning for Group Consequences

1. What are the behavioral expectations for the contingency?

_____

2. How will behavior be recorded?

_____

3. Establish baseline data and graph it.

4. What group rewards will be available?

_____

_____

5. Using the baseline data determine the initial criterion for reinforcement.

_____

6. Will the behavior be changed in a series of steps? _____

If yes, what will be the size of the steps and the criteria for changing from one step to another?

_____

_____

7. What will the length of the contingency period be?

_____

8. Will the length of the contingency period be progressively increased? _____

   If yes, what will the criteria be for changing the length of the contingency period?

_____

Figure 3.7. A form with a sequence of steps to aid in planning a group contingency intervention.

In such a case, the criterion for reinforcement would be five or fewer infractions per period. On the other hand, if the number of infractions is large, the criterion should use successive approximations. For example, the average number of infractions per period, in the baseline, is 35 and five would be acceptable. It is unlikely that you can move the level from 35 to five in a single step. Thus, the initial criterion might be 30 or less. When that criterion is consistently met for several days, change it to 25 and so on until you reach the desired level.

Once you have determined what the criterion for reinforcement will be, introduce the contingency to the group. Review the class rules with the students. Explain to the them how you are going to keep a record on the chalkboard, or in some other public manner, of how often class rules are broken. Tell them the record will start over at the beginning of each class period or whatever interval you will use. Tell the class that if the number of violations does not exceed 30, or whatever criterion was set, the class will get a reward. Tell them they can select a group reward from your reward menu at the end of each recording period. At this time, you should post a reward menu. If you are using successive approximations, tell the students that the number of violations allowed may change later. You are now ready to carry out your group contingency. Continue to plot the rule violation data on a chart to help you monitor the intervention. Show on the graph where the baseline data ends and the group consequence data begins with a vertical, phase change line (see Figure 3.8). You may find it helpful to make this graph public. A public graph provides the class with a visual representation of their behavior. Such feedback will often enhance the effect of the intervention.

There are two common problems that may arise. First, the intervention may not have the desired effect. That is, the data line on the graph does not begin declining after a trial period, for example, a week. If this happens, the reinforcers on the reward menu may not have enough incentive value for your students. The solution is to find some other rewards for the menu that are more attractive and try them. Another possible reason for a lack of success may be the use of too long of an interval for the contingency. This happens when your interval is longer than most of the students' ability to delay gratification. The solution is to shorten the initial interval for the contingency.

Second, the intervention is working for all but one or two students. The behavior of these students may keep the class from earning a reward. In this case, the rewards on the menu may not have enough incentive value for the problem students. One solution is to try adding some alternative rewards you think will appeal to the errant students. If this doesn't work, try using peer pressure. Bring peer pressure to bear by allowing the class, by majority vote, to suspend a student. When they vote to suspend a student, the student remains in the class but his or her rule violations don't count against the group. Of course, if the group earns a reward, a suspended student is not eligible to share in it with the class. You can either find some work for a suspended student to do or simply let the student sit and watch the group enjoy its reward. If you permit suspensions, they should only be for short periods, for example, one day. Don't permit suspensions of the same student more than once or twice per week. Further, don't permit suspensions on consecutive days.

The use of group consequences just described focused on measurement of inappropriate behavior and reward for reduction in that behavior. It is also possible to turn the procedure around

Violation of Class Rules

```
              Baseline           Intervention

        10 |                |
F        9 |                |
r        8 |   x        x   |
e        7 |        x       | x
q        6 |                |
u        5 |                |      x
e        4 |                |
n        3 |                |         x   x
c        2 |                |
y        1 |                |               x   x
         0 |_____|_____
              1   2   3   1   2   3   4   5   6

              Days           Class Periods
```
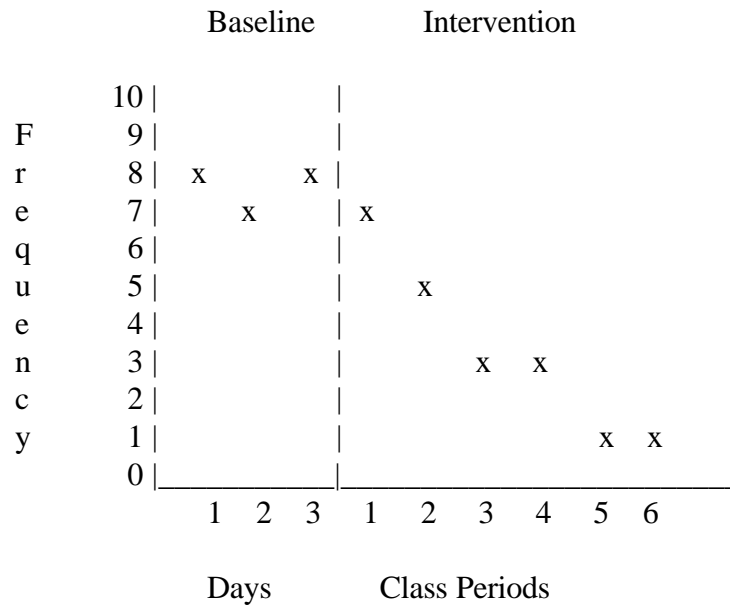
Figure 3.8. The baseline represents the mean number of violations per class period over a three day period. Intervention data is by class periods per day.

and measure appropriate behavior and reward for an increase in that behavior. Measuring appropriate behavior is logistically a bit more complicated. If you want to emphasize the positive, it is worth the extra effort. Assuming there is more appropriate behavior than inappropriate behavior, the least time consuming way to measure appropriate behavior is to use time-sampling.

In time-sampling, you need to set a fixed number of observation points for each period, for example, ten. You would then randomly assign times to each point, for example, 9:03, 9:07, 9:12, 9:15 and so on. You then observe and record, at the selected times, how many members of the group are being appropriate during each observation. You must vary the schedule of observation times to avoid being predictable. Once you have set-up a recording procedure like this, proceed as before but develop a plan to increase behavior rather than to decrease it. You can use the same planning form provided earlier for a positive intervention. The only thing that is different is the behavior and its direction.

Individual Consequences

You will find an instrument in Appendix 2, *The Index of Negative Student Behavior,* that you may find useful in identifying target behaviors for individual students. If you want to use individual consequences for appropriate behavior, you can use *Surprise Tokens* or *Random Drawing*. Surprise Tokens makes use of a variable interval reinforcement schedule. A token is anything, for example, a poker chip or a checkmark, that a student can exchange for a reward from a menu. Each reward on the menu has a price set in tokens. The menu should have several rewards of varying attractiveness and priced accordingly. That is, the greater the attractiveness the higher the price. If possible, the target behavior should be a response that is incompatible with inappropriate behavior and one you prefer to the misbehavior. For example, the target behavior might be on-task behavior because it is difficult to be on-task and engaged in misbehavior at the same time. It is also a behavior that you want to consistently see in students.

The key to this intervention is the use of *variable intervals* for awarding tokens. The easiest way to do this is to use a kitchen timer. You award tokens to anyone engaged in the target behavior when the bell rings. Each time you set the timer set it for a different length of time. This procedure keeps students from being able to predict when the bell will ring. Thus, consistent performance is the only way to ensure one is performing the target behavior when the bell goes off. When the timer goes off, give a token to each student performing the target behavior at the time the bell rang. With monitoring, you can also allow many students to reinforce their own behavior. That is, allow your students to give themselves a point or checkmark, if deserved, when the timer goes off. At token exchange times, allow students to exchange their tokens for whatever rewards they can afford.

Initially, the timer intervals should be short. For example, set a range of from three to nine minutes and then randomly select time settings from this range. When the target behavior is performed consistently, you can progressively increase the range from which you select intervals. For example, increase the range from three to nine minutes to six to twelve minutes and so on. Surprise tokens promotes both the target behavior and its consistent performance. Like any structured

Planning for Surprise Tokens

1. What is the target behavior? _____

2. What will be used for tokens? _____

3. What will be the interval between spending opportunities?

_____

4. What will the rewards be and what will they cost?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What will the initial range, in minutes, be for randomly selecting timer intervals from?

_____ _____

6. What criteria will be used for increasing the interval range for the timer?

_____

_____

7. How much, in minutes, will the interval range be increased each time?

_____

NOTES:

Figure 3.9. A form with a sequence of steps to aid in planning a surprise tokens intervention.

intervention "Surprise Tokens" requires some planning (see Figure 3.9).

The "Random Drawing" is another procedure you can use to change individual behavior. This strategy makes use of a drawing to award prizes. Again, some of the earlier considerations, like selection of rewards and intervals, apply here also. The possible target behavior(s) for a Random Drawing are varied. You might use class rules or one or more behaviors like on-task, task-completion, having necessary materials, or having homework ready. Conduct the intervention by simply allowing students to place a slip of paper with their name on it in a box, jar, can or other container. For example, place a student's name in the container whenever someone turns in their homework. Sometimes you may target a high frequency behavior that occurs at unpredictable times like hand raising to request help. For such behaviors, combine this procedure with the use of a kitchen timer and use variable intervals as described in Surprise Tokens. The last student to exhibit the target behavior just prior to the timer ringing would have his or her name placed in the drawing container.

One way to speed up the process is to have students prepare name slips in advance. They can keep these in an envelope or other container to have ready when you ask for one to put into the drawing container. Another method is to prepare name strips on which a student's name is printed 10-20 times. Each name is pre-cut to make the name slips easy to tear away. Have each student tape a strip of names to the front of his or her desk or wherever you can easily reach them. You can also have each student prepare a master sheet of name slips and use it to make copies from. This will cut down on the amount of time spent in preparing name slips.

At the end of predetermined period of time, for example a day, hold a drawing. The student whose name is drawn receives the prize offered that day. If you want to increase the chances of winning, you can have first, second and third place prizes. If you have multiple prizes, you can increase suspense by drawing for the first place prize last. You must exercise careful control over the drawing container so students don't have an opportunity to sneak their name slips into it.

Individual Contracts

A *behavioral contract* is another behavior management tool for working on the problems of an individual student. This is simply an agreement between you and the student about some desirable change in behavior. The target behavior should be by agreement, not dictated. Contracts will be most successful if the contract addresses only one specific and discrete target behavior. For example, "be on time to class" rather than "act responsibly." The goal for a target behavior should be attainable. That is, don't ask for large changes in behavior all at once. For large changes in behavior, use successive approximations conducted through a series of consecutive contracts. Finally, write contracts for periods ranging from between one class period and one month. Most contracts should be for short periods. The length of time used will depend on the developmental level of a student and the student's ability to delay gratification. The lower either is, the shorter the contract period should be and the smaller the behavioral change expectation. A behavioral contract has several parts:

1. The parties to the contract.
2. The target behavior.
3. The goal for the target behavior.
4. The time period for the contract.
5. The reward available for meeting the terms of the contract.
6. The penalty for failing to honor the contract (optional).

It is best to put a contract in writing. Both parties to the contract should sign it. Both parties to the contract should have copies. If contracting is used regularly, develop a basic contract form so copies are easy to make (see Figure 3.10). A contract form let you write a contract by simply filling in blanks.

Self-Management

Self-management involves teaching students to monitor and evaluate their own behavior. They can also learn to prompt and reward themselves. Students who are ready for self-management are only those who can assume some responsibility for their behavior and want to manage themselves. When teaching self-management, you need to actively assist a student. Once a student understands and is able to apply the process, you should reduce your assistance. Eventually, you can completely withdraw from the process. Since this strategy can go with a student to other settings, consider it an ecological intervention.

First, help a student choose a behavior to monitor. Teach the student how to write a brief behavioral definition for the behavior. A behavioral definition describes the objective and observable responses or effects of a behavior. For example, daydreaming is not objective but stopping work and looking out a window is objective. Likewise, anger is not objective but hitting someone or tearing something up is observable. In self-monitoring, an internal state of emotional arousal, such as anger, can be monitored provided the proper internal cues, e.g., muscle tensing are identified and used to define the emotion.

Second, teach a student the appropriate recording technique for the behavior to be monitored. This can even include *narrative recording* if the purpose is to do a *functional analysis* of the target behavior. Narrative recording is simply a written record, often done in a four column format including, the behavior, when it occurred, what immediately preceded it and what immediately followed it. An analysis of this narrative record will often be helpful in identifying the relevant antecedents and consequences associated with the target behavior. Teach the recording technique *event recording* (a tally) for behaviors such as looking up from a task. Teach *permanent product recording* (a score) for behaviors like performance on a spelling test. Teach *duration recording* (a measure of elapsed time) for behaviors like studying. A *self-rating scale* (low 1 2 3 4 5 high) can be used to estimate behaviors involving time like gazing out a window or involving internal emotional states like anger.

Next, teach a student how to plot his or her data on a personal data graph. Help the student

I'VE GOT A DEAL, YOU CAN'T TURN DOWN!

IF YOU _____

_____ BY _____

THEN I WILL _____

_____ _____   _____ _____
Teacher's Signature   Date   Student's Signature   Date

===
The contract above is an example of a contract for younger students and the one below for older students.
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Performance Contract

I _____ agree that I will meet the following terms and conditions:

  _____

no later than _____

at which time I will receive _____

from _____.

If I fail to fulfill this contract, I understand and accept the following penalty:

_____

_____   _____
Student's Signature   Date

_____   _____
Teacher's Signature   Date

Figure 3.10. Examples of individual behavior contract forms for both younger and older students.

set a goal for his or her target behavior. Represent this goal with a horizontal line on the graph. The student can then compare his or her behavior to the goal. Research shows that simple graphic feedback from self-monitoring data can significantly affect behavior. However, in many cases feedback alone is not enough. In this event, a student can use more direct interventions.

Third, teach a student to use *stimulus control* techniques to modify behavior. This can involve avoiding the antecedents for the target behavior such as staying away from areas at school where people sneak smokes, when the target behavior is to stop smoking. It can also include teaching a student to self-prompt with antecedents for a behavior that he or she is trying to establish such as reflective responding. In the case of a behavior like reflective responding, the antecedents will often be self-talk. In self-talk a student silently recites a set of self-instructions like: Stop! Listen! Think! Respond!

Fourth, teach a student how to apply *self-reinforcement* as an aid to reaching a personal goal. Teach the student to select a reward that is under his or her control. For example, going to a movie or buying a music CD are rewards a student might be able to permit of deny him or herself. If the goal requires a large change in behavior, teach the student how to use successive approximations to achieve the goal. Show the student how to set daily or weekly goals that represent progressive steps toward the end goal. Each goal then becomes one of a series of criteria for reinforcement on the way to the final behavior. In some cases, it might be appropriate to teach a student to apply a negative consequence or penalty for either engaging in a negative target behavior or for failing to reach a goal for a positive target behavior.

Finally, you can also use contracting as part of the process for teaching self-management. Use sequential contracts to provide structure while teaching self-management skills. The overall target behavior for the sequential contracts would be to use of self-management skills. Individual contracts in the sequence would target the particular piece or cumulative pieces of the process for which the student will assume responsibility and for which the teacher will assume responsibility. As the contractual sequence develops, more and more of the self-management process will be incorporated into the contract as what the student will do and less and less of the process will be the teacher's responsibility.

Activities

1.   Develop two dialogues illustrating the wrong way and the right way to conduct a conversation with a student intended to deescalate what appears to be a state of negative emotional arousal.

2.   Draw a floor plan for your classroom that maximizes the use of proximity control.

3.   Evaluate the teaching triangle and discuss the pros and cons of using it in your classroom.

4.   Describe signals you could or do use for signal control (non-verbal signals, body language, verbalizations) in your classroom.

5.   Develop a set of behavioral expectations for your classroom.

6.   Develop a personal list of praise words that would be appropriate for your students and that you would be comfortable using.

7.   Design a recognition program for your classroom. Include recognition for both best behavior and most improved behavior. Indicate how these will be determined.

8.   Design a parent-note program for your classroom. Include a sample note and the criteria you would use to award notes.

9.   Generate a list of behaviors in your classroom that might be being reinforced by your attention to them.

10.   Develop a plan for establishing peer ignoring for an attention seeking behavior.

11.   Design a group consequence for good behavior that could be used in your classroom.

12.   Design either a Surprise Tokens or Random Drawing procedure that could be used in your classroom.

13.   Design a contract form that would be appropriate for your classroom and negotiate a sample contract with someone using the form.

14.   Contact your school system or other educational facility and find out what their policy is on physical management of students who are out-of-control. If there is no policy, draft a policy that you think is reasonable.

15.   With a partner practice the proper use of physical management techniques.

References

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